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Farm family living expenditures.
1938.

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CANADA
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CANADIAN FARM

Costs
Farm FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES

1938

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PREFACE

A record of expenditures from 1,692 farm families was secured for 1938 which provides a general basis of comparison between farm and urban family living expenditures. The form used to secure these data was patterned after the schedule employed in the 1937-8 survey of urban wage-earner families. Preliminary bulletins on the urban survey have already been published.

The data in this bulletin have been collected by the Agricultural Branch, co-operating with the Internal Trade Branch of the Bureau. The text and tables were prepared by D. L. Ralston, B.A., under the direction of H. F. Greenway, M.A.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R. H. Coats', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

R. H. COATS,
DOMINION STATISTICIAN.

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS - CANADA
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

CANADIAN FARM FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES, 1938

INTRODUCTORY

This bulletin contains preliminary results of a survey of Canadian farm family living expenditures in 1938. Complete records of living outlay were collected from 1,692 farm families on the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' list of farm crop correspondents. The records were more detailed than those returned for a similar survey for the calendar year 1934. Mechanical tabulation of the 1938 data has made possible a number of cross classifications of expenditure to be released at a later date. Average family living expenditures for the principal budget groups have been computed by provinces according to number of persons per family, the amount of living expenditure per person, the amount of living expenditure per family, the size of the farm, the amount of farm operating costs, and the type of tenure in the case of Prairie records.

The distribution and size of families contributing records may be observed from Table 1 which also shows the average number of persons per farm household according to the 1931 census. From this comparison it would appear that the survey families were slightly above average in size.

Table 1. - Distribution and Composition of Farm Survey Families, 1938.

| Area | Number of Survey Families | Average Number of Persons per Family | | Average Number of Persons over 18 | Average Number of Children 18 and under |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|----------------|---|---|
| | | 1931 Census | 1938 Survey | (1938 Survey) | |
| Maritime Provinces | 58 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 3.6 | 1.6 |
| Quebec | 208 | 6.1 | 7.6 | 4.1 | 3.5 |
| Ontario | 266 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 3.5 | 1.3 |
| Manitoba | 347 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 3.4 | 1.7 |
| Saskatchewan | 525 | 4.7 | 5.2 | 3.5 | 1.7 |
| Alberta | 274 | 4.3 | 5.0 | 3.4 | 1.6 |
| British Columbia | 14 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 2.6 | 1.2 |
| DOMINION | 1,692 | 4.9 | 5.3 | 3.5 | 1.8 |

SUMMARY OF 1938 FARM FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES

Annual living expenditures for 1,692 families operating farms in all provinces of the Dominion averaged \$763 during 1938. Almost two-thirds of these families spent less than \$800 for living requirements and only 20 per cent spent over \$1,000.

Cash outlay for food and clothing formed the principal budget items, and together comprised nearly 40 per cent of the total living expenditure. The food percentage of 19.4 was low in comparison with urban standards because of the large proportion of foods furnished from the farm. Other necessities, namely, shelter, fuel, and light, accounted for almost 10 per cent, while 9 per cent went for furniture and furnishings. Health care averaged almost 8 per cent of the total expenditure, and represented a cash amount for all families averaging nearly \$60. Transportation expenses averaged more than 7 per cent of total living costs, while life insurance premiums amounted to 6 per cent or an average outlay per family of \$47. Expenditure for recreation accounted for only 4.5 per cent of the family living costs, and expenses of household operation another 4.4 per cent. Education, welfare, gifts, and personal care constituted the remaining 12 per cent of the average family budget.

Table 2. - Summary of Farm Family Living Expenditures, 1938.

| Area | Total Living Expenditures per Family | Budget Group | Dominion Average Expenditures |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| | \$ | | \$ |
| Maritimes | 681 | Foods | 148 |
| Quebec | 706 | Fuel and Light | 40 |
| Ontario | 849 | Shelter | 31 |
| Manitoba | 724 | Clothing | 150 |
| Saskatchewan | 748 | Furnishings and Household Operation | 103 |
| Alberta | 826 | Health and Personal Care ... | 68 |
| | | Recreation | 34 |
| | | Transportation | 58 |
| | | Life Insurance | 47 |
| | | Education, Community Welfare | 67 |
| | | Gifts and Contributions | 17 |
| DOMINION AVERAGE | \$763 | TOTAL | \$763 |

Certain broad differences in provincial living expenditure patterns were noted. Living cost averages ranged from \$681 for Maritimes families to \$849 for those in Ontario. Farm households in Alberta spent an average of \$826, which was considerably higher than corresponding figures of \$724 and \$748 for Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Living expenses for Quebec families averaged slightly lower at \$706. Nearly 30 per cent of the households in Ontario and Alberta reported expenditures of \$1,000 or more, while in the provinces of Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the Maritimes, this proportion dropped to approximately 20 per cent.

Table 3. - Provincial Distributions of Farm Living Expenditure, 1938.
(Numerical Distribution)

| | Maritimes | Quebec | Ontario | Manitoba | Saskatchewan | Alberta | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| \$ 1- 399 | 8 | 47 | 38 | 72 | 91 | 50 | 308 |
| 400- 599 | 25 | 60 | 51 | 76 | 129 | 54 | 402 |
| 600- 799 | 10 | 40 | 48 | 84 | 128 | 60 | 372 |
| 800- 999 | 3 | 24 | 49 | 53 | 83 | 31 | 245 |
| 1000-1199 | 5 | 12 | 34 | 25 | 32 | 25 | 134 |
| 1200-1399 | 6 | 9 | 25 | 18 | 26 | 20 | 105 |
| 1400-1599 | - | 9 | 6 | 7 | 17 | 12 | 50 |
| 1600+ | 1 | 7 | 15 | 12 | 19 | 22 | 76 |
| TOTAL | 58 | 208 | 266 | 347 | 525 | 274 | 1,692* |

* Dominion averages include 14 records from British Columbia but no provincial totals were made for that province due to the small number of returns.

(Percentage Distribution)

[illegible]

FARM LIVING EXPENDITURES FOR PRINCIPAL BUDGET GROUPS, 1938.

Proportions of expenditure on goods classed as necessities were fairly consistent throughout the different provinces. Saskatchewan families spent 50.5 per cent of living budgets on the principal items of food, clothing, shelter, fuel, and light. Quebec families spent a very similar proportion of 49.9 per cent. Other provinces averaged slightly lower, and ranged from 48.2 per cent for Alberta to 44.2 per cent for Ontario. Saskatchewan fuel outlays were materially higher than those for other provinces while in Quebec the proportion devoted to clothing was unusually high. Actual dollar expenditures for the principal living necessities of food, clothing, shelter, fuel and light averaged \$369 for all provinces, and varied from \$398 for families in Alberta to \$324 for those in the Maritimes.

Family Expenditures for Food, Clothing, Shelter, Fuel and Light, 1938

| | Maritimes | Quebec | Ontario | Manitoba | Saskatchewan | Alberta | Average |
|---|-----------|--------|---------|----------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Average Expenditure | 324 | 352 | 375 | 346 | 377 | 398 | 369 |
| Percentage of Total Living Expenditure... | 47.5 | 49.9 | 44.2 | 47.7 | 50.5 | 48.2 | 48.3 |

Provincial expenditures on other budget items showed varying degrees of similarity. Transportation expense averages ranged from 8.8 per cent of total living costs for families in Ontario, to 4.3 per cent for those in Quebec. These amounts represented average expenditures per family of \$75 and \$30 respectively. Outlays for child education naturally were related to the numbers of children in the farm households. Education costs for Quebec families with an average of 3.5 children under 18 years of age, amounted to 6.5 per cent of total living expenses. In Ontario the corresponding number of children averaged 1.3 per family, with a considerably smaller proportion of 2.8 per cent spent on education. These proportions represented dollar averages of \$46 for Quebec and \$24 for Ontario. Recreation outlay showed a marked similarity in nearly all provinces, and was confined within narrow limits from 4.1 per cent to 5.0 per cent of family expenditure. Households in Quebec proved an exception, and spent a smaller proportionate amount of 2.8 per cent for this purpose. The actual cash outlay for recreation was relatively small, averaging \$34 for families in all provinces.

A complete statement of living expenditures showing provincial averages is contained in Table 4 on page 4.

Table 4. - Distribution of Farm Family Living Expenditures, 1938.

| AVERAGES IN DOLLARS | | | | | | | | PERCENTAGES | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|---------|------------------|-------------|--------|---------|----------|-------------------|---------|------------------|
| Area: | Maritimes | Quebec | Ontario | Manitoba | Saskat- chewan | Alberta | All Provinces | Maritimes | Quebec | Ontario | Manitoba | Saskat- chewan | Alberta | All Provinces |
| No. of Families: | 58 | 208 | 266 | 347 | 525 | 274 | 1692x | | | | | | | |
| Food | \$127 | \$136 | \$158 | \$140 | \$152 | \$159 | \$148 | 18.6 | 19.3 | 18.6 | 19.3 | 20.3 | 19.2 | 19.4 |
| Fuel and Light | 23 | 16 | 39 | 34 | 58 | 39 | 40 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 7.8 | 4.7 | 5.2 |
| Clothing | 140 | 164 | 138 | 145 | 144 | 164 | 150 | 20.5 | 23.2 | 16.3 | 20.0 | 19.3 | 19.9 | 19.6 |
| Shelter | 34 | 36 | 40 | 27 | 23 | 36 | 31 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 4.4 | 4.1 |
| Household Opera- tion | 27 | 29 | 35 | 36 | 34 | 35 | 34 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 5.0 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| Furniture and Furnishings | 59 | 75 | 83 | 67 | 60 | 73 | 69 | 8.7 | 10.6 | 9.8 | 9.3 | 8.0 | 8.8 | 9.0 |
| Health Care | 45 | 57 | 73 | 51 | 56 | 62 | 59 | 6.6 | 8.1 | 8.6 | 7.0 | 7.5 | 7.5 | 7.7 |
| Personal Care | 6 | 7 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 9 | .9 | 1.0 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.2 |
| Education of Children | 29 | 46 | 24 | 26 | 29 | 40 | 31 | 4.3 | 6.5 | 2.8 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 4.8 | 4.1 |
| Community Welfare.. | 40 | 25 | 49 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 31 | 5.9 | 3.5 | 5.8 | 3.9 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 4.1 |
| Adult Education ... | 3 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 5 | .4 | .4 | .7 | .6 | .7 | 1.0 | .7 |
| Gifts and Contri- butions | 17 | 14 | 19 | 17 | 16 | 22 | 17 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.7 | 2.2 |
| Transportation | 45 | 30 | 75 | 57 | 58 | 67 | 58 | 6.6 | 4.3 | 8.8 | 7.9 | 7.8 | 8.1 | 7.6 |
| Recreation | 30 | 20 | 35 | 33 | 37 | 41 | 34 | 4.4 | 2.8 | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.5 |
| Life Insurance | 56 | 48 | 65 | 50 | 38 | 42 | 47 | 8.2 | 6.8 | 7.7 | 6.9 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 6.2 |
| TOTAL | 681 | 706 | 849 | 724 | 748 | 826 | 763 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

x Including 14 for British Columbia.

FARM FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES, 1934 AND 1938.

Data from the recent survey of farm living expenditures during 1938 may be compared with the findings of an earlier survey conducted in 1934, although the records do not cover exactly the same families in the two periods. In order to gauge as accurately as possible the changes in farm living costs during this period, family living expenditures were compared on a per person basis. This method removed inequalities due to differences in the size of farm households, and gave a clearer notion of the relative economic position of families in the years 1934 and 1938.

Farm living expenditures per person averaged approximately 50 per cent higher for families in the 1938 survey, than for those in 1934. Provincial differences ranged from increases of 65 per cent and 62 per cent for families in Manitoba and Ontario respectively, to 43 per cent for those in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Harvests for 1937 in the last two provinces were poor, but comparatively good in Ontario and Manitoba. Per capita advances in farm living expenditures for households in Quebec and the Maritimes averaged 58 per cent and 51 per cent respectively. The foregoing percentage differences represented increased cash outlays per person of \$68 for Ontario families, \$56 and \$50 for Manitoba and Alberta families respectively, \$44 and \$43 for those in the Maritimes and Saskatchewan, and \$34 for families in Quebec. Since average farm living costs advanced less than 4 per cent between 1934 and 1938, it is evident that these increases point to a material improvement in living levels during this period. The year 1934, of course, was one of unusual stringency for farm families generally.

Expenditures for the principal items of the family budget contained some noteworthy differences in these two years. The more basic requirements of food and clothing experienced only a slight advance in the amount of actual expenditure per person. Consequently the proportions of total living outlay on these budget groups by families in the 1938 survey were noticeably less than comparable proportions in 1934. Increases in actual food purchases never exceeded \$6 per person in the average family budgets of the various provinces, but proportionate amounts spent on foodstuffs declined by percentages ranging from 9.7 for families in Ontario, to 6.4 for those in Manitoba. In 1934 Ontario farm households spent 28.3 per cent of their total living expenditure on food, while in 1938 the proportion dropped to 18.6 per cent. Corresponding percentages for Manitoba were 25.7 and 19.3. Clothing expenses showed a very regular advance in all provinces, with an average increase of \$6 per person. In no province was there an advance of less than \$5 and in none was it greater than \$7. As in the case of foodstuffs, the increase in clothing expenditure was at a much less than proportionate rate as compared to the rise in total living costs. Clothing expenses for Ontario households in 1934 accounted for 22.2 per cent of total living expenditures, and in the later survey this amount dropped to 16.3 per cent. Families in Saskatchewan and Quebec showed the least declines in the proportions of expenditure on clothing. In the former province, 20.7 per cent was devoted to clothing expenses in 1934, while the slightly lower amount of 19.3 per cent was spent for this purpose in 1938. Corresponding figures for Quebec families were 25.7 per cent and 23.2 per cent at these two respective periods. Fuel purchases per person showed very little change during the four-year interval, but in relation to the total living budgets of the families, they registered a noticeable decline. Proportions of expenditure spent for fuel dropped as much as 9 per cent for families in Saskatchewan, and as little as 2 per cent for those in the Maritimes.

Expenditures for household furniture and furnishings advanced fairly consistently in all provinces. This was observed also to a lesser degree in the case of health care. Proportions of total family expenditure for furnishings registered a slight advance among families in Ontario and Quebec, but were relatively stationary in other provinces. Proportionate amounts spent on health were fractionally lower in most instances, but in no province was the decrease greater than 3 per cent.

The remaining items of the family budget comprised of such expenses as transportation, recreation, life insurance, community welfare, gifts, etc., experienced the greatest advances from 1934 levels. A combined grouping of these items disclosed expenditure per person averages in 1938 more than double those reported by families in the earlier survey. For example, per person expenditure for this miscellaneous group averaged \$22 among Ontario families in 1934 and \$63 in 1938. These figures represented a shift from 19.5 per cent of the family budget to 42.1 per cent.

Table 5. - Average Living Expenditures per Person, 1934 and 1938.

| Area | Average Number Persons per Family | | Food | | Fuel | | Clothing | | Household Furnishings | | Health | | Miscellaneous | | Total | |
|--------------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|----------|------|--------------------------|------|--------|------|---------------|------|-------|------|
| | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 |
| | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| Maritimes | 5.8 | 5.2 | 24 | 24 | 5 | 5 | 21 | 27 | 8 | 17 | 7 | 10 | 22 | 48 | 87 | 131 |
| Quebec | 8.4 | 7.6 | 17 | 18 | 4 | 3 | 15 | 22 | 5 | 14 | 5 | 8 | 13 | 28 | 59 | 93 |
| Ontario | 5.0 | 4.8 | 31 | 33 | 13 | 10 | 24 | 29 | 10 | 25 | 9 | 17 | 22 | 63 | 109 | 177 |
| Manitoba | 6.0 | 5.1 | 22 | 28 | 10 | 8 | 22 | 28 | 8 | 20 | 7 | 12 | 17 | 46 | 86 | 142 |
| Saskatchewan | 5.7 | 5.2 | 28 | 29 | 18 | 12 | 21 | 28 | 8 | 18 | 8 | 13 | 18 | 44 | 101 | 144 |
| Alberta | 5.3 | 5.0 | 31 | 32 | 11 | 8 | 27 | 33 | 12 | 22 | 13 | 14 | 21 | 56 | 115 | 165 |

Percentage Distribution of Principal Family Living Expenditures, 1934 and 1938.

| Area | Food | | Fuel | | Clothing | | Household Furnishings | | Health | | Miscellaneous | | Total | |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|----------|------|--------------------------|------|--------|------|---------------|------|-------|-------|
| | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 | 1934 | 1938 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Maritimes | 27.2 | 18.6 | 5.7 | 3.4 | 24.3 | 20.5 | 9.3 | 8.7 | 8.5 | 6.6 | 42.2 | 25.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Quebec | 27.9 | 19.3 | 7.4 | 2.3 | 25.7 | 23.2 | 8.8 | 10.6 | 8.2 | 8.1 | 36.5 | 22.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Ontario | 28.3 | 18.6 | 11.9 | 4.6 | 22.2 | 16.3 | 9.5 | 9.8 | 8.6 | 8.6 | 42.1 | 19.5 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Manitoba | 25.7 | 19.3 | 11.2 | 4.7 | 25.0 | 20.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 8.7 | 7.0 | 39.4 | 20.1 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Saskatchewan | 27.7 | 20.3 | 17.4 | 7.8 | 20.7 | 19.3 | 8.2 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 7.5 | 37.1 | 18.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Alberta | 26.7 | 19.2 | 10.0 | 4.7 | 23.0 | 19.9 | 10.8 | 8.8 | 11.0 | 7.5 | 39.9 | 18.5 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

FARM LIVING EXPENDITURES IN RELATION TO FARM OPERATION COSTS.

A detailed study of the principal expenses of farm operation was carried out in conjunction with the 1938 survey of farm living expenditures. Results from this section of the survey will be published at a later date. Average expenditures on farm operation accounted for a greater proportion of total annual outlay than expenditures for living requirements. From the reports of 1,692 farm households, expenditures in operating farms, apart from taxes and mortgage payments, averaged nearly 29 per cent more than money spent on farm family living. This amount represented a cash outlay of \$984 as compared to \$763 for living costs. Provincial ratios of living costs to farm operating costs showed marked differences. In Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, farm operation outlay averaged close to 60 per cent of farm expenses, i.e., living expenditures plus operating expenditures. For families in Ontario this proportion dropped to 52 per cent, and still lower to 45 per cent and 46 per cent for farm households in Quebec and the Maritimes respectively.

The majority of farms reported operating expenditures of less than \$1,600. More than 80 per cent of expenditure totals were within this range, and less than 10 per cent were above \$2,400. The average size of all farms was approximately 400 acres, with provincial averages ranging from 150 acres for farms in Quebec to 604 acres for those in Saskatchewan.

Table 6. - Farm Family Living and Farm Operating Expenditures, 1938.

| Province: | Maritimes | Quebec | Ontario | Manitoba | Saskatchewan | Alberta | All Provinces |
|---|-----------|--------|---------|----------|--------------|---------|---------------|
| No. of Farms: | 58 | 208 | 266 | 347 | 525 | 274 | 1692 |
| Average Acreage.... | 177 | 150 | 155 | 382 | 604 | 523 | 401 |
| Farm Living Expenditure | 681 | 706 | 849 | 724 | 748 | 826 | 763 |
| Farm Operation Expenditure | 577 | 567 | 931 | 1070 | 1043 | 1238 | 984 |
| (exclusive of farm taxes and interest charges) | | | | | | | |
| Operation Expenses as Percentage of Total Annual Outlay | 45.9 | 44.5 | 52.3 | 59.6 | 58.2 | 60.0 | 56.3 |

Table 7. - Percentage Distribution of Farm Operating Expenditures, 1938.

| Total Amounts | Maritimes | Quebec | Ontario | Manitoba | Saskatchewan | Alberta | All Provinces |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|----------|--------------|---------|---------------|
| \$ 1- 399 | 48.3 | 51.0 | 20.7 | 25.1 | 23.2 | 25.5 | 28.3 |
| 400- 799 | 20.7 | 26.4 | 33.8 | 28.0 | 29.1 | 23.0 | 28.0 |
| 800-1599 | 27.6 | 18.3 | 30.1 | 26.8 | 28.6 | 21.9 | 25.8 |
| 1600-2399 | 1.7 | 2.9 | 9.0 | 10.9 | 10.5 | 14.6 | 9.7 |
| 2400+ | 1.7 | 1.4 | 6.4 | 9.2 | 8.6 | 15.0 | 8.2 |
| TOTAL | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Families Reporting | 58 | 208 | 266 | 347 | 525 | 274 | 1692 |

